

### **The Church - Community of Faith:**

Now that the Gospel has been preached, and had been accepted by the faithful; we turn to the topic of the Church, the 'place' where this faith is to be lived out. Here we look at the Church as the 'Body of Christ', that is His sacramental presence in the world. Because the Church is Christ's Body, we will, in this topic, explore some basic Christology; the study and reflection on the person and nature of Christ. Because the Church is also 'Bride of Christ', here we will look to Mary and see in her the reflection of the perfection of the Church.

- Place of living out conversion
  - Community of Faith
  - The Church as community not just a building
- Body of Christ
  - His Sacramental Presence here & now, in space and time
- Hint of Christology
  - low - focus on humanity (Matthew, Luke)
  - high - focus on divinity (John)
    - Church - both human and divine
- Mary - Model Disciple
  - Integral and foundational
    - Jesus Christ comes to us through Mary
  - what's true of Mary is true of the Church
    - promises to Mary are for the whole Body
    - fully human
    - she hints to us of what is coming
      - He was told, "Your mother and your brethren are standing outside, desiring to see You. But He said to them, "My mother and My brethren are those who hear the Word of God and do it"  
-Luke 8:20-21

- We are given permission to go to Jesus through Mary (Marian Consecration)
  - Pentecost
    - true 'ikon' of the Church
      - united in prayer w/ Mary & Apostles (without all we are not Church)
        - Eucharistic
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- Plan of Jesus
  - Intends that what He has begun will continue
- 'Revelation' of the Church
  - Jesus calls Apostles
    - More than 'disciples'
      - Mark 3:14-15
  - Mandates a mission
    - Make more disciples
    - Baptize them into this Church
      - Matthew 28:16-20
  - Pentecost
    - Empowers the Church to fulfill mission
    - Gifts of the Spirit
- Self-understanding of the Church
  - "*Lumen Gentium*"
    - Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, Vatican II
      - Mystery of the Church
      - People of God
      - Hierarchy
      - Laity

- Universal Call to Holiness
  - Religious
  - Eschatological
  - BVM
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* [follows many of the lines of *Lumen Gentium*]
  - Origin, Foundation, Mission 758-769
  - Church - Body of Christ 787-796
  - Church - Temple of the Holy Spirit 797-801
- Church - dispenser of the *Mysteries of God*
  - Liturgy - 'work' of the Church
  - Sacraments - experience of grace
    - Sacraments of Initiation
      - Baptism
      - Confirmation
      - Eucharist
    - Sacraments of Healing
      - Reconciliation
      - Anointing of the Sick
    - Sacraments at the Service of Communion
      - Marriage
      - Holy Orders
- Body of Christ
  - Jesus - Head of the Church
  - Jesus - fully God AND fully man
  - Jesus - sacrifice to the Father on our behalf
  - Jesus - 'giver' of the Holy Spirit

- Bride of Christ
  - Mary - model of the Church
  - Mary - “Fiat” [docile]
    - Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. [*Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.*] -Luke 1:26-38
  - Mary - Cana [intercessor]
    - When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “O woman, what have you to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever He tells you.” -John 2:1-11
  - Mary - foot of the Cross [suffers]
    - Standing by the foot of the cross were His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing near, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. -John 19:25-27
  - Mary - Pentecost [prays]
    - Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away; and when they had entered, they went to the upper room, where they were staying. [names the eleven] ... All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. -Acts 1:12-14

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Practical Practice: Read Chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium*. Prepare a short reflection on one aspect you found interesting. You may also want to reference material in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC).

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Handout: *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter 8

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Resources:

- 1) *Lumen Gentium* by Pope Paul VI. Dogmatic Constitution of the Church.

November 21, 1964

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_en.html#](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html#)

- 2) *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC)

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM)

- 3) *Our Lady and the Church* by Hugo Rahner, S.J.

<https://www.amazon.com/Our-Lady-Church-Hugo-Rahner/dp/0972598111>

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